philosophies

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Communicology, Decoloniality, Chicana and Latina Phenomenology: Building Community Through Struggle

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Abstract: The present work considers the communicative dimensions of intellectual practices in an effort to discern how these practices can take full account of their own placement within and accountability to the human communities and cultures they cultivate. The discussion is framed with a focus on intellectual communities who have struggled against the dominance of Euromodern epistemological orientations that have constructed their own cultures and intellectual practices as irrelevant or, at best inferior. This struggle is a decolonial praxis. The development of communicology during the post-World War II period in the United States is taken up as an approach to theory construction that allows for the fullest possible examination of the very human condition in which thought and action emerge. Chicana and Latina phenomenology constitute a further development of this decolonial praxis consonant with the sensibilities of communicology. Chicana and Latina phenomenology is shown to advance our understanding of philosophy as an intellectual (i.e., communicative) practice that takes place in a world of other human beings to whom we are accountable. Theory construction as it relates to boundary conditions is taken as an important point that spans the all too common gap between the existential and the cultural and aids in constituting a theory construction project that is also a decolonial praxis.

Keywords: communicology; decolonial praxis; Chicana and Latina phenomenology; boundary condition

Citation: Martinez, J.M. Communicology, Decoloniality, Chicana and Latina Phenomenology: Building Community Through Struggle. *Philosophies* **2024**, *9*, 188. https://doi.org/10.3390/philosophies9060188

Academic Editor: Marcin J. Schroeder

Received: 17 October 2024
Revised: 2 December 2024
Accepted: 4 December 2024
Published: 13 December 2024

1. Introduction

Let us presume that intellectual practice requires community, that is, a shared social milieu through which thought becomes manifest as a human expression seeking connection and understanding with others. Let us presume further that this shared milieu allows our intellectual practices to move beyond solipsism and into fields of engagement wherein our thought can be tested, revised, and developed in ways that hold our practices accountable to the human world in which our varying capacities for expression and perception implicate us in the values that become manifest as a result of those communicative engagements. These are big presumptions to make when we consider the proclivity of thought and language to forget its dependency upon the lived world of human beings from which they emerge. This proclivity, also known as the "forgetfulness of rationality," reduces thought to "intellectualism" and degrades the reflexive capacity of consciousness to the level of puerility. As Richard Lanigan puts it, a genuine philosopher is one who is "concerned more with the human condition of ideas than with the ideas themselves" [1] (p. 5). Lewis Gordon puts the matter bluntly, "the social dimensions of philosophy's development are often elided in the most elite corridors of the academy" [2] (p. 107). Frantz Fanon is succinct: "no phraseology can be a substitute for reality" [3] (p. 45).

These two presumptions—that intellectual practice requires community and that we are implicated pragmatically in the thought, action, and values that emerge from those communities—have been most obviously revealed as deficient by communities of thinkers whose histories of intellectual work have been elided in the founding of the European enlightenment and its modernity. Here, I refer to the people and cultures across Africa,

Abya Yala, and the global south prior to and since the 15th Century European colonization projects. The work of Chicana and Latina theorists, philosophers, and phenomenologists, in particular, has addressed these issues with insight and determination since the 1980s.

The construction of the European enlightenment and its modernity emerges from the perspective taken by the colonial cultures about themselves as the "civilized" against the "primitive", thus setting up epistemological systems that seek to establish their thought as objective and complete and in so doing authorize the delegitimization and dehumanization of those whose intellectual and cultural practices are not of European origin. This delegitimization and dehumanization includes the codification of racial and sexual hierarchies. Gordon refers to this Euromodern epistemological system as the "theodicy of Western civilization" that functions "as a system that [takes itself to be] complete on all levels of human life", including notions of what is and what ought to be. In short, the theodicy of Western civilization constructs itself as a completeness of "being and value" [4] (p. 1). These epistemological foundations of Euromodernity codify specific *boundary conditions* of thought and practice that construct the human field of knowing as an external, objective, and transparently perceivable reality; reason, as the process through which ideas become manifest, is thus reduced to an intellectual instrumentality (i.e., rationality). Racial and sexual categories, in particular, become determinative, and the human interrelationships from which ideas emerge are treated reductively as irrelevant background whose influences on thought must be removed or at least minimized. The imposition of this European modernity upon Africa, Abya Yala, and the Indigenous cultures of the global south is, in the words of Anibal Quijano, "catastrophic" precisely because this "instrumentalization of reason" became a dominating force fundamentally associated "with liberation" [5] (p. 207). The catastrophe is the upholding of a system in which the concept of human liberation is reduced to instrumentalization.[1] This instrumentalization of human liberation creates an "indifference" to human interconnections that is "insidious" because it "places tremendous barriers in the path of the struggles of women of color. . .toward communal integrity" [6] (p. 188).

In the work that follows, I begin with a discussion of the struggle against these Euromodern epistemological orientations that have constructed non-Euromodern cultures and intellectual practices as irrelevant or, at best, inferior. Next, I consider the development of communicology during the post-World War II period in the United States as an approach to theory construction that allows for the fullest possible examination of the very social milieu in which thought and action emerge. Third, I show how the work of Chicana and Latina phenomenologists constitute original theorizations that develop this decolonial praxis and direct us toward careful examinations of our communicative imbrications within the sociality of community. In short, I demonstrate how the practice of Chicana and Latina phenomenology, particularly in the work of María Lugones and Mariana Ortega, advances our understanding of philosophy as an intellectual practice and liberatory struggle that takes place in a world of other human beings to whom we are accountable.

2. Decolonial Praxis: The Struggle Against Euromodern Coloniality

For as long as there have been humans, there have been people thinking together—that is, communicating and philosophizing. Yet, the conventional notion that locates the authority of formalized philosophy in Ancient Greece sustains a context of inquiry that casts a very large shadow over other philosophical traditions that are not connected to Ancient Greece. Gordon characterizes this situation as a presumed center around which thought is structured thusly:

> Euromodern colonialism, for instance, stimulated lines of ethnophilosophical movements often disguised as 'universal' and 'primary'. Thus, Anglophone empiricism and European continental rationalism paved paths to what are today known as Anglo-analytic philosophy and (European) continental philosophy. African and Asian philosophies orient themselves in professional philosophy in relation to theses, and First Nations and Indigenous people of many kinds

> among colonized countries stand in relation to these hegemonic organizations of philosophical identity.
>
> [7] (p. 6)

The question of how one orients oneself in relation to the world around them is a deeply phenomenological question that carries implications across all of the communicative domains of one's life. Consciousness emerges in our very relationship to ourselves, which is mediated by our relationship to others, our relationship to the groups we help form, and our relationship to the cultural milieus in which we were raised and have lived. All of these domains of communication are simultaneously present as features of the consciousness through which we grasp the meaningfulness of our existence and direct our attention toward our projects in the world. To participate in an intellectual community is to engage in all of these communicative domains with the particular purpose of making one's thought present and available to others. The questions or ideas toward which one directs their thought reflect their inherited social situation as much as the unique confluence of thought and experience that is the person who thinks, feels, and acts. Encounters across differing cultural domains (i.e., intercultural communication), in particular, create a circumstance in which one's normative communicative presumptions cannot be taken for granted. As a result, one is presented with a concrete reality that holds the possibility of bringing to awareness how the communicative domains that constitute their present situation become manifest. In the best of circumstances, the fundamental openness that is our communicative (i.e., semiotic) capacity allows one to recognize when others within our communicative domains are navigating through those domains differently than oneself and can lead one to take up the deeply humanizing practice of seeking mutual understanding. Mariana Ortega [8] calls this the "in-betweenness" of our situatedness. Jane Anna Gordon [9] and Michael J. Monahan [10] refer to this as "creolizing practices." Our human situatedness creates the conditions in which these latencies of communicative realities stand ready to unfold as actualities realized among communicators.

For the people and cultures that have been the object of Euromodern colonialism, this fundamental openness of our human capacity to communicate is deeply degraded within the communities and relationships established by the colonial forces. This degradation occurs when a cultural semiotic is organized around an instrumentality that disguises itself as a "universal humanism" and thus blinds itself to those who are culturally different—and this is the case in the colonial encounter.[2] In this way, the colonial encounter fails to achieve the concrete value of humanism that is deployed when we recognize the limits of our communicative capacities with specific others, groups, and cultures and seek to expand our communicative capacities by virtue of an openness to learning beyond what we are currently able to grasp within consciousness. The concrete value of humanism becomes manifest when we are able to engage this fundamental openness of our communicative capacities with others whom we recognize as thinking and living very differently from ourselves. The proof of this achievement lies in the relational conditions thusly discovered as an intersubjective semiotic rather than as a posited idealization.

The professionalization of intellectual communities functions similarly to the colonial encounter in that professions themselves are a dominating force that structures the terms through which individual practitioners gain legitimacy. Lewis Gordon's observation that today's professional philosophy positions Anglo-analytic and European continental philosophy as the center around which African, Asian, First Nations, and Indigenous philosophies must orient themselves points to a boundary condition that functions as a relation of instrumentality or informational reality. To the degree that this instrumentality is invoked as an exclusion of the communicative realities in which we are relationally situated, we have an epistemological coloniality.

3. Communicology

Communicology is a neologism that is little understood and often miscited in the US American context. This lack of understanding is a historical consequence of how

academic institutions have been organized in the United States over the past 100 years or so.[3] The division of knowledge into the "sciences" and "humanities" in the United States creates the unfortunate institutional division in the study of communication between those specializing in "scientific" approaches, which by and large adopt a positivist science model, and those specializing in rhetoric, thusly subsumed under the "humanities" model. The name "communicology" has, at times, been adopted by those studying communication within a strictly social science paradigm where the "ology" is applied as it is for biology, physiology, or psychology. The correct adoption of communicology, however, requires theoretical foundations that function outside of the social science/humanities split that dominates the US American academy.

The correct adoption of communicology follows a rich historical trajectory with origins in what has been referred to as the Yale School of Communicology [1]. Yet we should be cautious about approaching communicology as a complete or contained "School" that sets the conditions for its own replication as such. It is better to understand the emergence of communicology in the United States as an underside to "mainstream communication studies," in which this rich historical trajectory remains largely ignored in graduate programs in communication.[4] Despite not having been established through widespread institutionalization in graduate curricula within the United States, communicology remains a clearly established area of advanced theory and research internationally and among the Collegium of Fellows elected to the International Communicology Institute. One characteristic of this community of scholars is the focus on our human capacity to cultivate further accountability to the human condition in which our intellectual work itself proceeds.

Communicology is deeply concerned with our human situatedness within communicative realities as distinct from informational realities.[5] Our theoretical entrée into these distinct but related "realities" is both semiotic and phenomenological. It is semiotic in the sense that to be human is to be situated within the ceaseless activity of signs and sign systems that give us pre-conscious and unconscious orientations toward existential meaningfulness. Our human capacity for speech is, of course, fundamental to all aspects of our communicative realities, and language itself is a powerful semiotic system that participates equally in communicative and informational realities. On this point, it is crucial to remember that while all language is communication, not all communication is language. Language, studied from a strictly structuralist approach, yields much insight regarding the constraints of meaning creation as dictated by the articulatory power of human speech; however, that articulatory power always functions within a context of human consciousness, which means that however accurately we identify those constraints of meaning as dictated within the formal linguistic system, they cannot account for the fact our human capacity to make those very constraints an object of our consciousness awareness, which enables the emergence of a communicative relation that is not delimited by them. The important point here is that language can be reduced to an informational reality wherein the objective is to pinpoint, isolate, and seek determinative finality to meaning and that this task, if not balanced by attention to communicative reality, degrades our capacity for engaging precisely with the human condition from which ideas themselves are situated, sustained, defended, and challenged; equally, it degrades our capacity for accountability within our human condition.[6]

It is at this point that the semiotic sphere must encounter the phenomenological sphere of human embodiment as it reveals the emergences of consciousness. Our human capacity for consciousness of consciousness creates an irreducibly existential condition in which we are responsible for the choice of context we select as we direct our consciousness toward the construction of meaning *to me*. It is also from within this irreducibly existential condition that each of us constructs a relationship with ourselves that is fundamentally mediated by the cultural, linguistic, social, and interpersonal semiotic systems within which we are situated. This relationship to self, as reflected in the choice of context, constitutes a boundary condition from which communicative realities emerge.

Here, we can turn to the foundational work of Jürgen Reusch and Gregory Bateson [20] to identify five primary domains, or levels, of communicative reality: (1) the intrapersonal level, which is part of our very perception of, or disposition toward, ourselves, one's awareness of self; (2) interpersonal level, which functions across our most intimate relationships and casual acquaintances; (3) within groups wherein we find affiliation and affirmation; across groups where we encounter the challenges of overcoming differences codified in the delineation of groups as such; (4) within cultures as we carry preconscious and unconscious preferences for ways of life and presumptions about what is and should be; (5) across cultures where we confront different ways of life that are very difficult to understand unless our own preconscious preferences and presumptions can be brought into our conscious awareness. Social institutions also function at the cultural levels and are equally relevant in the way they create preconscious and unconscious preferences and presumptions that manifest across all levels.[7]

We are always simultaneously present within each of these levels of human communication, but the communicative conditions necessary for us to consciously attend to and act within each of these levels differ in some very important ways. At the interpersonal and group levels of communication, it is relatively easy to elicit feedback that allows us to assure the relative accuracy of our communication with specific others by checking the alignment of our referents and the equivalency of our intended and received messages—racist presumptions, cultural parochialism, and prejudices of perception can be most easily addressed within interpersonal relationships wherein we care about the other because we recognize that we are implicated in the consequences of our engagements and that allows for greater openness to seeing what we previously had not; however, at the intrapersonal, cultural, or institutional levels and intercultural levels, the pathways for checking the accuracy of our understanding are much more complicated and require an explicit choice to examine our imbrication with communicative realities across all levels.

All of these five levels of communication are present as our communicative reality, but because our attention to one level diminishes our attention to the other levels, each of these levels functions as a boundary condition of consciousness. Boundaries are not barriers. Barriers function in a fixed or static way to keep some things inside and other things outside. Boundary conditions, on the other hand, are dynamic, fluctuating, living phenomena that cannot exist except for their interdependent contingencies. Boundaries are established by the "energies" at the boundary itself that dynamically evolve as different bits of information are variously accepted or rejected across the boundary. None of us can escape the fact that we are implicated within larger domains of communication where signs of race, gender, sexuality, and culture remain primary signifiers of an informational reality that often supplants our communicative realities.

4. Chicana and Latina Phenomenology

The phenomenological tradition has given us much to work through in our understanding of the complex relationships between our human situatedness and consciousness, between our communicative interdependencies and freedom, and between our sense of self as persons and the cultures in which we were raised. In the hands Gloria Anzaldúa [21], Maria Lugones [22], Linda Martín Alcoff [23], Mariana Ortega [8], Jacqueline M. Martinez [24] and many others, we see the full capacity of these phenomenological themes turned directedly and incisively toward the very Euromodern borders that have delimited much, if not all, of the most influential phenomenological work. The concept of "borderlands," as developed in the work of Anzaldúa, and "world-traveling", as developed in the work of Lugones, have led to the development of large bodies of scholarship that have, over the past four decades, significantly advanced our understanding of our human imbrication in communicative worlds that circulate racist, sexist, and homophobic tropes as bedrock features of Euromodern cultures. This work, advanced by many Chicana and Latina philosophers and phenomenologists, has not only elevated our understanding of

the immense contributions to be found in Anzaldúa's and Lugones' work but has also generated more nuanced and insightful perspectives directly related to phenomenological considerations of how borders/boundaries and our notions of selfhood impact our communicative realities.

Gloria Anzaldúa's [21] (p. 25) poetically evocative description of "borderlands", for example, captures the notion of the "energies" that establish boundaries in deeply insightful ways. Anzaldúa describes the southern border between the United States and Mexico as "*una herida abierta*", an open wound. This geographical border creates boundary conditions that maintain the colonial relation of "civilized" versus "primitive" at the level of a cultural semiotic. The result is that those who dare to cross this boundary condition by seeking communicative legitimacy are reduced to an informational reality in which they are "aliens". Anzaldúa [21] (p. 25) describes borderlands as "a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary". This "unnatural boundary" can be understood as a boundary condition that imposes an informational reality functioning within a closed cultural semiotic of presumed universal humanism that codifies the reduction of specific types of human beings to fixed things. Communicative reality, in contrast, is constituted by what we might call "natural" boundary conditions. In this sense, "natural" boundary conditions evolve dynamically across an open cultural semiotics of "knowing unknowns" [24] (pp. 46–50). As persons engage these "natural" boundary conditions, we have the capacity to move from a "vague and undetermined place" to existing within a community that functions as a communicative reality that, by definition, remains open to the discovery of what had previously been pre- or unconscious.

The body of work produced by Chicana and Latina phenomenologists and philosophers has been most fully detailed in Ortega's work, *In-Between: Latina Feminist Phenomenology, Multiplicity, and the Self* (2016), to which I now turn. Taking up a critical examination of the phenomenological themes present in the work of Gloria Anzaldúa [21], Maria Lugones [22], Linda Martin-Alcoff [23], and Martinez [24], among others, Ortega offers us her own conceptualization of the self as a "multiplicitous self", which articulates the contours of what I am referring to as communicative realities.[8]

Working specifically from Maria Lugones' deeply impactful work, "Playfulness, 'World'-Traveling, and Loving Perception", Ortega offers us a Heideggerian informed concept of the multiplicitous self that resides in the "in-between". Communicative reality requires active engagement in our human relationality; thus, "in-between" cannot be reduced to an informational reality that might occur when one seeks to identify and concretize the coordinates of this "in-between". For example, consider these statements: I am mixed race and therefore in-between white and Hispanic culture; I am a queer person of color, and therefore I do not fit in with white queer people or straight people of color. While these statements may be accurate at the experiential level, they can also be deployed reductively to an informational reality, which, if fully accepted, will be replicated in each new encounter based on the identification of the signs that are taken to signify racial and sexual categories. The phenomenological treatments of our encounters with others across identity categories offered by Chicana and Latina theorists counter this tendency and provide an entrée into the very communicative realities through which these signs gain saliency.

María Lugones' 1987 phenomenological essay entitled, "Playfulness, 'World'-Traveling and Loving Perception", [22] marks a decisive moment of Latina feminism's deployment of phenomenology toward an incisive articulation of engaging communicative reality in ways that create accountability to others at the level of one's awareness of what appears in their consciousness. In this essay, Lugones offers us a clear view of communicative realities as they unfold in experience. In this work, we see the power of phenomenological descriptions deployed toward incisive theoretical articulations that demonstrate how communicative realities can be reduced to informational realities that sustain arrogant or racist relations that are fundamentally sadistic—that is, relations that make others into objects to satisfy the

desires of the self—as they circulate across multiple domains of communication. Lugones' treatment of each of the three key terms in this essay—playfulness, world-traveling, loving perception—offers us rich and insightful descriptions of the perceptive and expressive constraints she encounters, first as a daughter growing up in Argentina and later as a foreigner within white/Anglo academic feminist organizations in the United States. In these ways, Lugones shows how "arrogant perception" functions as a constraint on one's perceptive and expressive capacities and how these constraints can be chosen at the level of consciousness. It is from the position as a cultural outsider that Lugones sketches for us the communicative realities as they are contoured at the cultural and intercultural levels of communication and are sustained interpersonally in ways that have the power to delimit one's very relation to and understanding of themself at the preconscious level. Lugones offers the notion of "world-traveling" to denote what can happen when we engage in the fullness of communicative realities. Ortega modifies Lugones' description of "world traveling" into what I see as a more fully communicative practice when she describes it as "a practice in which the multiplicitous self has access to an opening or aperture to different worlds. This practice has an epistemic component in that the multiplicitous self can understand [themself] and different worlds in relation to the particular aspects of self and world and are highlighted or animated while traveling" [8] (p. 89). In point of fact, we all have the capacity to seek openings to different worlds in the sense described by Lugones and Ortega. Yet, our ability to realize this capacity is directly linked with our willingness to recognize our consciousness of our own consciousness and then direct that recognition toward the complexities of the communicative realities in which we are engaged. This requires recognizing the choices we make at the level of our own conscious awareness. This means refusing to reduce communicative realities to informational realities as we assess the proper object of our consciousness as the reality to which we hold ourselves accountable. The refusal to assess the adequacy of the objects of consciousness leads to what Lugones [22] refers to as the infantilization of judgment.

5. "Hometactics", Belonging, Evidence

I turn now to the concept of "hometactics", a neologism offered by Mariana Ortega to describe "practices that we might suddenly recognize as granting us new possibilities of belonging in a location and a sense of identification with others with whom we may or may not share social identities, all without the appeal to a fixed home location, an intentional self-integrating life-project, or a set of so-called authentic identity markers" [9] (p. 205). The advantage of Ortega's formulation of hometactics is its focus on cultivating possibilities of belonging. Feeling a sense of belonging, or believing in the possibility of developing such a sense, is essential to building community. As helpful as the preceding analysis of communicative and informational realities may be, this abstract distinction is deployable only as a matter of our concrete relations with others. Moreover, for most human beings, some sense of belonging is a necessary condition for exercising our perceptive and expressive capacities within the contingencies of our concrete relations with others.[9]

Through the deployment of hometactics, Ortega offers us a way of thinking about how we can pursue a project of coalitional politics (or genuine intellectual community) that is "mindful of both location and relation" and that "we should give up all attempts at projects of self-integration" [8] (p. 201). Examining the boundary conditions, or the "in-betweennesses", that function to contour our communicative realities cannot be projects of self-integration because that would presuppose a self that sets itself toward a presumed knowing of what that self is or will come to be. As a project, self-integration unfolds over time and in reflection. If taken up with a sense of an a priori self fully integrated into a world of other people, we seek only that evidence that supports that a priori notion of self. Instead, we must turn our attention to the specificities of our communicative realities as they emerge in our engagements with them. Once we do this, the question of evidence must be pursued as an artifact of communicative realities rather than a fixed informational reality that seeks apodictic certainty.

Evidence of our perceptive and expressive attunement to the immediate and concrete terms in which communitive realities are sustained is most directly accessed in our closest interpersonal relationships as they are oriented with openness and a caring investment in a mutually enriching future. Our access to the clarity of this kind of evidence tends to decrease as we engage with others with whom we have less care or investment. At the group or community levels of communication one is more removed from the feedback that can reveal the limits of one's perceptive and expressive capacities. This distance leads to a sustained or fixed orientation toward those levels of communication and allows one to avoid seeking evidence of perspectives from within those communicative realities that are not what one presumes. This fixed orientation becomes an abstraction that is applied across all communicative contexts, and it allows one to adopt a view of oneself wherein they see only that evidence that supports their own self-integrated view in that the boundary of the self is taken as self-contained. This leads one toward solipsism or idealism and away from the kind of communicative relationships that support the building of community.

Coming to realize that my very self-consciousness emerges within communicative realities and, therefore, that my normative presumptions regarding the relevance of identity categories are inadequate as a basis for engaging communicative realities is a basic feature of the "in-between" that Ortega is describing. This means coming to realize that my very self-consciousness is not about me as an isolate source of my existence. It is only when we recognize a world of others and learn "not to conceive of our perspectival views as independent of each other"[10] that we can come to recognize how we pre-consciously constitute the thing we see collectively—whether that be interpersonal, within our group, as a member of a culture, or as a functionary within an institution. As a self that does not seek self-integration, the multiplicitous self engages consciousness of consciousness as a non-self-referential project. That is to say, the multilplicituous self, situated in the "in-between", recognizes that while I am bound to my consciousness, I am incapable of fully apprehending all of what is present in my consciousness. Hometactics can guide us in a "critical good-faith recognition" [22] (p. 167) of our embodied relations to others.

6. Conclusions

Consciousness, and the possibility of self-consciousness, emerges from within a communicative context, and while it is true that each of us has the agency to craft the meaning we come to make of any given experience, we do so in ways that are various, though inescapably, bound by and to complex currents of our social and cultural time and place. How we are bound is a question of our orientation or how we direct our consciousness toward the influence these social and cultural currents have on what appears in our consciousness in the first place. By attuning our perceptual and expressive capacities to the borders, or boundary conditions, in which our consciousness fluctuates, we increase our ability to be existentially accountable to the communicative realities we help create. Accountability to others in the human world requires taking responsibility for our imbrications within our communicative worlds, and this requires attentiveness toward boundary conditions. It requires a constant awareness that there will always be boundary conditions of which we are unaware and that to become aware of unawarenesses that are nonetheless relevant to how awareness becomes possible cultivates different kinds of perceptive and expressive capacities, which gives us avenues of accountability we might not otherwise have.

We must always be aware of the problem of the reification of presumptions shared around our most common labels for identity, particularly identities that are presumed to carry particular kinds of political relevance—that is, racial, sexual, and cultural. The problem here is, on the one hand, that these presumptions are often so deeply taken for granted that they escape any critical consciousness and, on the other hand, that our own investments in them close down or shrink our capacity to live them in expansive ways that reflect more fully the dynamic and evolving communicative realities that constitute our embodied existence. Moreover, this leads to another problem, that is, the proclivity to use these common labels to declare a righteous position from which to assert the value of

our existence and demand that others recognize us in specific and determined ways. To be clear, there is nothing wrong with asserting a kind of valorization of our existence in terms of our self-understanding. The problem occurs when the seeking of such a valorized position involves the invocation of fixed informational reality to which the self and others are required to adhere without also holding ourselves accountable to communicative conditions that offer evidence of the accuracy of our self-understanding. If we wish to valorize humanity or hold our shared humanity as a righteous condition of engagement, then we must grapple with the nature of the evidence we take as relevant to that valorized or righteous status.

I began this work with a focus on the development of intellectual communities within contexts of colonial epistemologies that function to reduce communicative realities to informational realities. I have taken the perspective that intellectual practices must be seen and valued according to their ability to cultivate community. When intellectual practices are reduced to the content of ideas to the exclusion of the human condition of these ideas, we have a degradation of the communicative possibilities present in our exertions of genuinely relational humanity. Decolonial praxis recognizes this problematic and explicates its limits so as to invigorate our intellectual communities with a commitment to the communicative realities in which the value of our human existence may be realized collectively. I have highlighted how Chicana and Latina theorists, philosophers, and phenomenologists have been doing this kind of work for decades and featured the distinctive role that communicology can play in furthering this work.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: No new data were created or analyzed in this study. Data sharing is not applicable to this article.

Acknowledgments: I would like to thank the external reviewers and the editorial staff for their very helpful feedback and editorial work respectively. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Joint Meeting of the Interdisciplinary Coalition of North American Phenomenologists and the Society for Phenomenology and Human Sciences. Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA 23 May 2024.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflicts of interest.

Notes

1 Throughout this work, my reference to "instrumentality" follows the very important distinction between communication and information. "Instrumentality" functions as information to the exclusion of communication. The theoretical implications of this distinction are developed below.

2 Existentially, to reduce one's communicative reality to an exclusively informational reality is to act sadistically or masochistically. It is sadistic when I reduce the other to an object to be used for my instrumental purposes. It is masochistic when I reduce myself to an object to be used for another's instrumental purposes. See Gordon [11] and Martinez [12] for a full elaboration of this point.

3 See also Lanigan [13] for a crucial account of the historical development of communicology in the United States through a progressive movement of "rhetoric-public speaking-speech-communication-communicology" (p. 391). See Lanigan [14] for a general account of the development of communicoloyg. See also Macke [15] for an incisive examination "speech communication" as an academic discipline. Burleson [16] critiques the academic discipline of communication for assuming rather than problematizing communication. See Leeds-Hurwitz [17] for a discussion of how the study of intercultural communication became institutionalized in the United States. The pragmatic emphasis on cultural sign systems and codes, as well as concerns with the semiotic mediations between cultural and existential particularity emerged later with the development of communicology and what Catt [18] explicates as "embodiment in the semiotic matrix".

4 Duquesne University is a noteworthy exception. Southern Illinois University was the center of graduate level curriculum in communicology until the retirements of Richard Lanigan and Thomas Pace.

5 In theory construction terms, we refer to communicative realities as "communication theoretic" practices and informational realities as "information theoretic" practices.

[6] Not all linguistics is formally structuralist. Roman Jakobson's communication theory is foundational in communicology. See Holenstein [19] for the definitive account of Jakobson's "phenomenological structuralism".

[7] Jürgen Reusch (1909–1995), a psychiatrist, and Gregory Bateson (1904–1980), an anthropologist, both immigrated to the United States in the post-WWII era. They met in 1949 at a Macy Fouccation conference in New York City. Brigning together their respective training in psychiatry and anthropology, they produced *Communication: The Social Matrix of Psychiatry*, a work that is foundational in the discipline of communicology.

[8] See Martinez [12] for a full explication of the difference between "communicative realities" and "informational realities".

[9] I say "for most" simply to allow for those cases of sociopathy or narcissism wherein human interaction is reduced to the instrumentalism of informational realities.

[10] See details in Merleau-Ponty [25] (p. 369).

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